

lost only ten seconds in changing steeds. In fact, he had changed horses and was traveling again almost before his foaming pony had come to a standstill.

Since 250 miles had to be made per day, no surplus weight in rider or equipment was permitted. The lithe young man was allowed only a revolver and a knife for self-defense. The letters and telegraph dispatches were printed on tissue paper. These were wrapped in oilcloth and sealed in pouches, not to be unlocked until the end of the route was reached. The cost of postage was \$5 a half ounce in the early months of the service, but was later reduced to \$1.

The regular assignment was for each rider to carry the mail from sixty to seventy-five miles before being replaced by another rider. But sometimes the men were forced to do the assignment of two or three men without stopping.

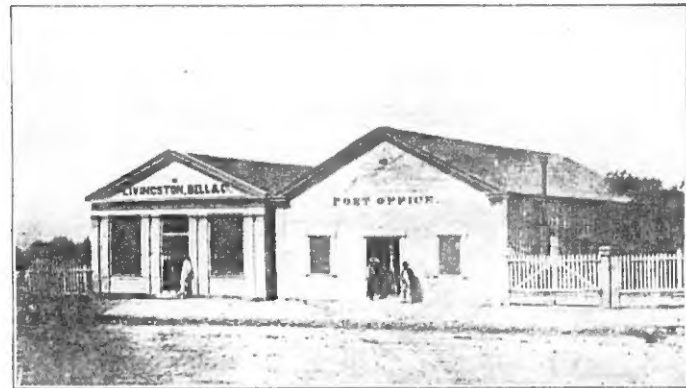


PONY EXPRESS RIDER PURSUED BY INDIANS

Pony Bob (Robert H. Haslam) made one ride of 308 miles without leaving the saddle. The Indians had killed the men at the next station. He passed the burning ruins not only of that station but two others before he found a rider to take his place. Buffalo Bill once rode 321 miles without a stop, except for meals and change of horses.

Another famous rider was Thomas Dobson, a Utahn. One of his trips was a test of endurance and bravery rarely equalled in the history of the Pony Express. He traveled 322 miles. During the journey he was attacked

letter was carried by Ezra Benson, who with others started back to meet the next company. It told about the new settlement in the valley, and speaks with appreciation of the fact that every person who left Winter Quarters with the original company came through safely. The number in Salt Lake by August 2 was 450 souls. The pioneers on the plains were assured of help should they need it, and all were encouraged to be cheerful and praise God for His goodness.



Our Early-Day Post-Office in Salt Lake City

First Post-Office.—In the winter of 1849 the federal government established a post-office at Salt Lake City, and appointed Joseph L. Heywood as postmaster. It authorized a bimonthly mail between Council Bluffs and Salt Lake City. Almond W. Babbitt was engaged to carry the mail at his own expense.

First Mail Contract.—The discovery of gold in California in the later forties and the great overland migration to the Pacific coast in 1849 necessitated the establishment of a mail route across the continent west of the Missouri River. In

From Camp, Valley of the Great Salt Lake
August 2, 1849

My dear Charles C. Rich, and the Trustees and Officers of the Emigrating Company.

I have adopted for a better notice than I could have, to communicate to you by express, the cheering intelligence that we have arrived in the most beautiful valley of the Great Salt Lake. We have found what we left behind, and we are, and shall be, an enjoying good people. That portion of the Battalion, who were at this with us, together with the Emigrating Company that accompanied them, and they are generally well. We number about 450 souls, and we have of us many that are of the same age and condition as the young of a city this morning. We feel that the time is fast approaching when those things that are going to be the future of this place should be on the way. Every individual here would be glad to hear of them, and we are, but as many of the Battalion, as well as the Emigrating Company, have just their families here, and it is not certain that they are in such a camp, we wish to know by express from you the situation of your camp as especially as possible. That we may be prepared to Council and act in the whole matter, we think you should know us the nature of every individual in your camp, or in other words a copy of your Camp Roll; including the names, numbers of husbands, wives, children, etc. On the 1st of the month of your camp, your location, prospects, etc. If your name just now, and if your camp is not well able to take care of themselves, if you are short of provisions, or any other circumstances impeding your progress, we want to know immediately, for we hope help for you. And if your names are in your right, and will be able to return to their families this season, or any portion of them, we want to know. We also want the names, which will include not only the names, but the names, belonging to the camp, general and particular. If the circumstances permit, we would gladly meet you some distance from this, but our time is very much occupied. In short, we think you will see us before you are ever visiting. Let us the Battalion and the Emigrating Company, and know accurately what you have heard, and answer the same. We hope to see you in a goodly camp, and our friends are waiting for you. Brothers, we have some good news for you, and we are glad to hear that you will be glad to hear of it. We have not time to write. And we feel to be glad all the time.

In behalf of the Council
Brigham Young, President.
Willard Richards, Secy.

First Letter Written from Salt Lake City